

Oregon DLCD announces step toward 'increased housing production, affordability, choice'

SALEM – On Dec. 5, the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) unanimously adopted the first set of rules the state will use to implement comprehensive, system-wide housing planning reforms to address Oregon's housing crisis, the commission announced recently.

According to a press release, the adopted rules direct the approaches and methods local governments will use to reverse decades of underinvestment in housing production and meet community needs. They do this by:

Standardizing planning—Local governments across the state will use the same methods to determine local housing need, creating a better statewide assessment of need and allowing to coordination across regions.

Supporting local governments—Accountability measures will allow the state to track local progress toward housing targets and help when cities or counties have difficulty making progress. Technical assistance, funding and other resources from the state will be available to help local governments meet their housing goals.

Reducing legal vulnerability for local governments—Local governments will have clearer obligations for meeting housing needs.

Focusing on Equity—The community engagement required of cities ensures that housing policies address the needs of marginalized and underserved groups.

The second phase of rulemaking will seek to provide clarity and certainty in how cities assess the capacity of land within an urban growth boundary to meet their community's housing need.

The third phase will include the development of a suite of adoption-ready actions and other resources local governments can use to address housing need. The three phases of rulemaking, concluding before January 2026, will result in what the DLCD calls "Oregon's most significant housing reform in decades."

"The level of effort and care that our commission, staff, and partners have taken with these rules is a testament to our collective desire to serve Oregonians," said Brenda Ortigoza Bateman, DLCD Director. "These rules will help Oregon communities accurately identify and characterize housing need. Meeting that need through housing production will require a multi-disciplinary effort, involving infrastructure and development-ready land, local government staffing capacity, and access to capital."

"It is truly rewarding to reach this important milestone having witnessed the immense efforts devoted to this process over the last two years," added Anyeley Hallova, LCDC Chair. "As a real estate developer, I'm keenly aware of the scope of investment and lending that is critical in supporting the housing solutions we desperately need in Oregon and how we need to address the current gap. As commission chair, I'm

encouraged that our newly developed rules build a strong framework to better serve our diverse communities and increase equitable housing production across the state."

Former Director of the Oregon Fair Housing Council and Vice-Chair for the commission, Allan Lazo, served as commission liaison to the rulemaking effort and has been deeply engaged in this work throughout development of the rules.

"We know that every part of the state is in a housing crisis, and these rules in front of us today, this is the part of the solution this commission plays," he shared during commission's deliberation. "These rules address all three legs of the stool—production, affordability and choice."

"There are going to be pieces of this we don't agree with, that we won't get right, that we will need to come back to," he added, "but every benchmark we reach as a commission moves us leaps and bounds above our last step. There are capacity issues in cities and local governments, shifting regulations that they are being asked to comply to—which really emphasizes the ongoing support this program needs. This will take a long-term commitment from all involved agencies and the legislature for more than just production, for affordability and choice. I think there is something in this program for every community. And it sends the message that we are doing what we can do to move Oregon beyond a crisis."

This initial reform to Oregon's rules for planning for housing is accompanied by a suite of services and tools created by partner agencies, including:

The Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) will develop methodology to estimate the state's 20-year housing needs and set housing production benchmarks for local government progress and outcomes. DAS must publish the methodology and production targets annually, with the first release scheduled for Jan. 1, 2025.

The Oregon Department of Housing and Community Services (OHCS) will develop a housing production dashboard to monitor local governments' permitting progress toward housing production targets. Additionally, OHCS will establish indicators for monitoring equitable housing outcomes by local governments. OHCS must publish the dashboard and equity indicators annually, with the first release scheduled for Jan. 1, 2025.

DLCD will adopt and amend all rules associated with the legislation by January 2026. DLCD aims to reform the implementation of housing planning from a narrow focus on zoning and land capacity towards a more comprehensive framework that emphasizes local actions to promote housing production, affordability, and choice within communities and across the state.

Questions or feedback about the project can be directed to the DLCD Housing Team at housing.dlcd@dlcd.oregon.gov.

Christmas Messages From Area Churches

Victory through the Resurrection

The Apostle Paul once declared in 1 Corinthians 15:50-56, "Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ". (NASB).

I bring this scripture to your attention today because, each and every time we come and gather around for Christmas, we as His followers are celebrating and declaring Jesus' victory. He came to this earth to ultimately go to the cross and rise from the grave, giving us the validation of each and every word Paul spoke in these verses.

Without the victory of Christ's resurrection, none of these amazing promises would be available for us to embrace today. It's because of the resurrection of Christ that each and every person, regardless of the sins one has committed, all now have the opportunity to choose to place their faith in Jesus.

All have the option to embrace His forgiveness and grace by joining in His

victory over sin and death. What a wonderful Savior we have! A Savior who was willing to take on flesh so that He could take on all our sins upon Himself in order to free us from such a state of slavery.

I encourage you to take the time this Christmas to truly reflect on the implications of Paul's words for your own life.

As we celebrate Christmas this season, I encourage us all to remember that, because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, all now who embrace Him as Lord are free from the sting of death and granted everlasting life in the kingdom of God.

Pastor Quentin Byers
Heppner Christian Church

Christmas Eve service at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 24

Carry the message beyond the season

This Christmas, as we gather with loved ones to celebrate, let us remember the true essence of the season: the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. His arrival in a humble manger reminds us of God's boundless love and the hope He brings to a world longing for peace.

May this holy season inspire us to be instruments of kindness, generosity and compassion. As we exchange gifts and share meals, let us also give the gift of our time, our care and our prayers to those in need.

Let us embrace the angelic message of "peace on earth, goodwill to all" and carry it beyond the season, fostering unity and love in our communities.

Wishing you and your family a joyous Christmas filled with faith, hope, and love, and a New Year abundant in blessings.

Merry Christmas and God bless!

Father Alexandar Poulos
St. Patrick and St. William Catholic parishes

Mustang boys lose close games to Rangers

The Heppner Mustang boys' varsity basketball team lost a close game with the Dufur Rangers Dec. 17 by a score of 47-41.

Dufur scored the first basket, but then Heppner quickly took the lead in the game. The score remained close for the entire quarter. When the horn sounded, the Mustangs led by the score of 13-11.

The second quarter remained close as both teams battled it out. Dufur outscored the Mustangs 13-6 in the quarter and took a slight lead into halftime 24-19.

The Mustangs started the second half out slowly and struggled to score early. Dufur jumped out to a brief nine-point lead until the Mustangs cut into the deficit. At the end of the third quarter Dufur led by the score of 35-27.

Heppner couldn't cut into the Ranger lead during most of the fourth quarter. A late surge by the Mustangs in the last couple of minutes of the game led to the final score of 47-41.

Mason Orem led the team in scoring with 14. He also had five rebounds

and two assists in the game. Next was Joseph Albitre with eight points and four rebounds. With seven points each were Caleb George and Gage Heideman. George also had three rebounds, and Heideman contributed four rebounds and an assist for the team. Keaton Coiner scored five points, had six rebounds and an assist on the night. Jackson Coiner dished out two assists, Marty Medina had two rebounds, and with one rebound each in the game were Alakae Rodriguez and Caylan Proudfoot.

The Junior Varsity Mustangs lost their game at Dufur by the score of 42-32. Heppner trailed 18-12 at the end of the first quarter and 26-14 at halftime.

At the end of the third quarter the score was 34-24 in favor of Dufur. The Mustangs couldn't get any closer and lost the game by the score of 42-32.

Jace Wilson led the team in scoring with 10. Gage Heideman was next with nine, and Tripp Stewart finished with six. Darby Spivey followed with five and Mason Seitz scored two.

Sen. Hansell reflects on 12 years of service in final speech before retirement



Oregon Senator Bill Hansell delivers his farewell speech Dec. 12 in Salem. -Contributed photo

SALEM, Ore. – Dec. 12, Senator Bill Hansell (R-Athena) delivered his final speech to the Oregon Senate, reflecting on his 12 years of service and the privilege of representing Oregonians in the state's legislative body.

As he prepares for retirement, Hansell emphasized the rare honor of being one of only 30 individuals at any given time to hold the position of Oregon State Senator.

"I believe it's important to reflect on how special this job is," Senator Hansell said in his farewell address. "Out of over four million Oregonians, only 30 Senators have the privilege to wear the Senate pin at any given time. It's a responsibility I've taken with the utmost respect, and I've learned just how rare and special this role really is."

As part of his final speech, Senator Hansell shared a unique memento of his time in office. He presented framed, signed posters from each of the six Senate sessions he served in, displaying the auto-

graphs of all 180 members who worked alongside him during those years. These posters, which are believed to be the only complete collection of their kind, will be donated to the Secretary of the Senate's Office as a symbol of his deep appreciation for the people with whom he served.


Senator Hansell also took a moment to honor the lasting connections he made with his colleagues. Of the 30 Senators who served alongside him during his first year, five are still in office today, including Senators Brian Boquist, Fred Girod, Tim Knopp, Floyd Prozanski and himself. Over the course of his tenure, 62 other individuals had the privilege of wearing the Senate pin.

He concluded his speech with words of advice for those who continue to serve: "Wear your pin with dignity and honor, as you represent the people of Oregon. You are part of a very exclusive, very special group. You are one in a seven-millionth of one percent."

Mail carriers deliver holiday cheer



USPS elf Shari Ober is busy delivering Christmas cheer in her red-nosed Toyota. It's that time of year when USPS mail carriers play Santa's helper, making sure all the toys and goodies get delivered by Christmas morning. -Photo by Cindi Doherty



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Lunch & Dinner Menu

12/26 - 1/1

Thursday - ham sandwich with corn chowder soup
Friday Grilled Chicken Sandwich and cottage cheese
Saturday Hot Turkey and tomato sandwich with jojos
Sunday - broccoli cheddar soup and salad
Monday - Chicken bacon ranch wrap and deep fried green beans
Tuesday - Taco burger with chips
Tuesday night - 6-9pm \$2 hard shell tacos
Wednesday - popcorn chicken mashed potato bowl
Have a safe and Happy New Year

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Mark your calendar for the following events:

New Year' Eve – December 31st
 Prime Rib Dinner at 5pm with music by Joe & Andrew Lindsay
Elk's Annual - February 15th Annual hosted by ER Shane and Regi Lazinka



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